



LE·HI·HO News

the Lehigh Valley Homophile Organization
Box 1003, Moravian Station, Bethlehem, Pa. 18018

June, 1981

Circle dinner parties will take the place of our meeting on June 28th. Enough people have signed up for four dinner parties. Our Social Activities chairperson randomly assigned the names of those who signed up as guests to those who signed up as hosts. The hosts will be contacting their guests in the near future to arrange who will bring what food to the dinner party.

The next general meeting at the Unitarian Church will be on Sunday, September 27, 1981 at 2:00 pm. Tentative topics for discussion are: Community Services for Gays, Men in Feminism, The New Right - The Moral Majority, Gays and Lesbians and the Law, and Gay Alcoholism. We welcome your suggestions.

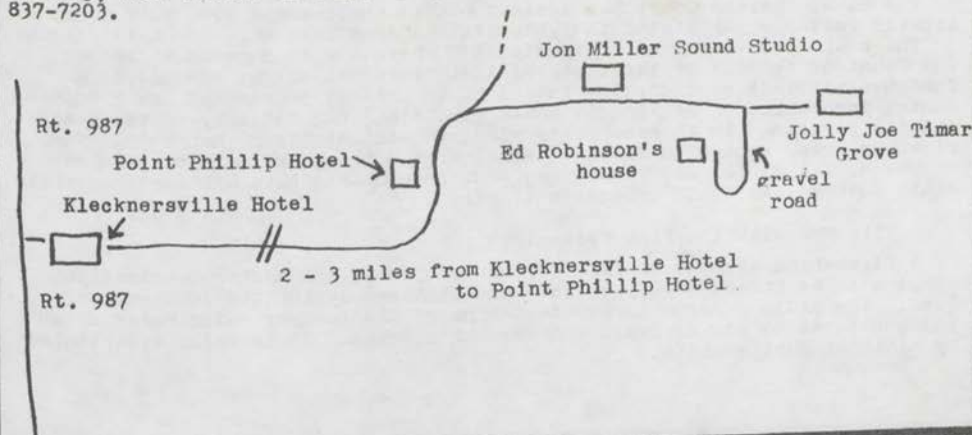
SUMMER PICNIC

On Saturday, July 18th LE-HI-HO will have its summer picnic at the home of Ed Robinson near Point Phillip, north of Bath, PA. Rain date is the following day, Sunday, July 19th.

The festivities will start at 1:00 o'clock. Swimming will be available. Bring your own picnic lunch and beverages. Refrigerators will be available. A charcoal grill will be provided. Also bring a dish (salad, relish, melon, cheese, etc.) to share with others. Ed doesn't have enough lawn chairs for everyone. So if you have folding lawn chairs, please remember to bring along one or two. Try to car-pool to conserve gas (about 1/2 hour from Bethlehem) and parking space at Ed's home.

If the weather is questionable, you may call Ed Hill (432-6561) between 10:00 am and noon to find out if the party will be held on Saturday or on Sunday.

From Rt. 22, take Rt. 512 north to Bath. From Bath take Rt. 987 north to Klecknersville. At the Klecknersville Hotel turn right toward Point Phillip, then follow the map. If you get lost, phone Ed Robinson at 837-7203.



LE-HI-HO Inc.

I mentioned in the May issue of LE-HI-HO News that the Board of Directors appointed a committee to consider incorporation of and tax-exempt status for our organization. The committee recommended incorporation, the formation of an advisory board of community members, and fund-raising of \$ 300.00 to cover legal expenses.

The Board of Directors considered the committee's recommendations and voted unanimously to start incorporation procedures if and when the required \$ 300.00 can be raised. An anonymous donor has agreed to match (up to one-half of the cost of incorporating) any funds raised by LE-HI-HO. The Board voted to allocate \$ 25.00 from our general funds to start this special fund. The rest is up to you. If you want to help sponsor this project, send us your donations. Earmark your donation especially for incorporation.

\$ 300
- 150 matching funds
150
- 25 from general funds
\$ 125 balance needed

How much of the \$ 125.00 do you wish to contribute? When we receive \$ 125.00, incorporation procedures will begin. If we do not do not receive enough money for funding, your donation will be returned. Please send us your donation NOW.

ABORTION

Recently the U. S. Congress voted to adopt the most stringent anti-abortion measures to date. The Hyde Amendment, sponsored by Senator Jesse Helms (R - N. Carolina) and Representative Henry J. Hyde (R - Illinois), would bar federal funding of abortions unless the mother's life is in danger.

Previously, rape and incest abortions were paid for with federal funds. Now federal Medicaid abortion payments cannot be used for victims of rape or incest.

Pro-choice groups throughout the nation are angry about the near-fatal blow of the conservative rightists to control women's bodies.

SODOMY LAWS

The U. S. Supreme Court has decided not to challenge a 1980 N. Y. Court of Appeals ruling which stated that the state sodomy laws were unconstitutional.

The court case involved a gay minister charged with consensual sodomy. The Court of Appeals decision stated that "Personal sexual conduct is a fundamental right protected by the right to privacy because of the transcendental importance of sex to the human condition, the intimacy of the conduct, and its relationship to a person's right to control his or her body. The right is broad enough to include sexual acts between non-married persons".

The N. Y., N. J., and Pennsylvania Supreme Courts have all declared their state sodomy laws to be unconstitutional.

"The Men with the Pink Triangles"

A first-hand account of life for gay people in the Nazi concentration camps will be broadcast by public radio stations during the last week of June. The radio program is an adaptation of the book by Heinz Heger which was published by Alyear Press and Gay Men's Press. It is being distributed by National Public Radio.

Editor's note: Mike Barnett deserves most of the credit for the articles in this newsletter. I was busy with other matters, so Mike did most of the writing. Steve Cody also contributed his thoughts to the article about the conference.

Ed Ettinor

UNUSUAL SEX

"Unusual Sex" was the topic at the May meeting. Twenty-nine people listened to and participated in an informative, emotion-charged examination of the S & M and leather sex scenes.

First of all, reactions to the commercial film "Cruising", which depicts the New York City S & M leather scene, were expressed by various individuals. Some people were offended by the bloody, graphic violence. Others expressed concern that many straights may have the impression that this film is a depiction of all gay life, not a small part of it. Still others were not offended, and one person even noted that the police in the film mentioned that S & M is not the mainstream of gay life.

Next, Joe Burns, our program chairperson, introduced Gary Norton, a Harrisburg-based gay activist who is chairperson of the Rural Gay Caucus and who has presented workshops at Gay Pride conferences. Gary explained that the S & M scene can involve leather sex, bondage and discipline, the club scene, fisting, and the motorcycle scene. Even though there is no difference on the surface between the leather community and the S & M scene, there is a definite difference. The leather community enjoys the feeling of wearing denim and leather, making use of the macho image. In addition to the denim and leather, S & M is ritual enactment of dominance and submission (slave and master). It is a sexual experience that is MUTUALLY understood and CONTROLLED, involving verbal humiliation and degradation. Both participants know what they are getting into! Gary explained about the top (dominant) and bottom (submissive) roles of S & M. "In order to be a good top", he said, "you must have experienced the bottom". Many people change roles. A person usually starts at the bottom and works his way to the top. Gary told us that he cruises as a top, performs as a top, yet he would like to be bottom to a better top.

Doug Blackmer, a Chicagoan with whom Joe is sharing a bondage relationship, explained their lifestyle. Doug is a novice in the bondage scene who responded to Joe's ad. He has been involved for the last six months. Doug says that bondage isn't S & M. Instead, it is safe and fun, a macho, masculine area that is a turn-on for him. Joe and Doug agreed that there is real empathy between the top and the bottom. Part of the turn-on of S & M is vulnerability. The pain threshold of each person is different. But limits are respected. A good bottom is really in control, according to Joe, through his responsiveness (reactions) to the actions of the top.

Two other knowledgeable people in this scene, Paul and Ed, spoke about the existence of leather levi clubs, bike clubs, and drag show clubs.

I am sure that everyone learned a great deal from this frank discussion of a little-understood aspect of gay sex. Hopefully, we all left the meeting a bit more tolerant of one aspect of "unusual sex".

LAST CHANCE ?

"La Cage Aux Folles" will be shown August 7th and 8th at the Rodale Theatre during the annual summer filmfest of current, classic, and foreign hits. Check your newspaper for time and price.

• FACING THE LAW

A conference entitled "Lesbians and Gay Men Facing the Law" was held on June 6th in Philadelphia. The conference was sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Pennsylvania Council on Sexual Minorities. The A.F.S.C. and the A.C.L.U. are straight organizations dedicated to civil liberties for all. A slogan often quoted by the A.C.L.U. is, "None of us is free until all of us are free."

Major funding was provided by the PA Humanities Council and the Eastman Foundation (another straight organization). Hilda Silverman, Executive Director of the Greater Philadelphia A.C.L.U., was able to get funding for this conference after Tony Silvestre, Chairman of the Governor's Council on Sexual Minorities, had failed to get funds from the same organizations. Hilda later pointed out to our benefactors that gay groups should be able to get funding directly, without using straight organizations to sponsor our conferences.

The morning session included speeches by nationally known personalities: Dr. James Tinney, professor of Journalism at Howard University; Key Whitlock, lesbian-feminist activist and writer, and former Co-Chairperson of National N. O. W. Lesbian Rights Committee; Hilda Silverman; and Tony Silvestre. Key Whitlock's speech about "The National Context" concerned political trends to the right and strategies for maintaining and furthering gay rights in spite of efforts of the right to dismantle the progress made recently in gay rights. She said that we will need patience, courage, decency, compassion, and a lot of sense of humor. She quoted a famous black baseball player: "If they're running you out of town, make it look as though you're leading a parade."

Following the morning speeches, there were various workshops held in the morning, a break for lunch, and more workshops in the afternoon. The workshop leaders generally had impressive credentials in their respective fields and included several lawyers, professors, doctors, authors, and other professionals active in the gay rights movement.

The conference was superbly planned and implemented. I wish all of you had been there. In preparation for the conference (over a year in the planning stage) the A.C.L.U. engaged experts in many areas of gay concerns to write a booklet which was published just in time for this conference. It is called "Lesbians and Gay Men: The Law in Pennsylvania". Copies will be available in the LE-HI-HO library this Fall.

LE-HI-HO FALL SCHEDULE

Sept. 27th

Oct. 25th

Nov. 22nd

Dec. 20th